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**Day spa owner takes her passion for pampering to new heights**

*Podcast interview with Krystina Cabrera, Owner of Bella by Krys Day Spa; and Janelle Kozyra, member of the Kimco Realty blogging team*

**Janelle: Greetings everyone. I'm Janelle Kozyra, a member of Kimco's blogging team. Today I have with me Krystina Cabrera, who is the owner of Bella by Krys Day Spa in Vista, Calif. Krystina is one of the first Kimco KEYS tenants. The KEYS Program, if you're unfamiliar with it, is a program that Kimco launched in May 2012, and it's a business incubator program that gives participants a first year of free rent at any of the 100+ Kimco properties that are participating in the KEYS Program.**

**Right now, the program is in California. It's still in a pilot phase and Kimco is hoping to expand it nationwide. We're excited to have Krystina with us, as she is one of the first KEYS tenants to come through the program. So Krystina, it's great to have you with us today. Thanks for joining us.**

Krystina: Thank you. It's great to be with you.

**Janelle: So Krystina, you've just opened. Before we get to talking about the spa, tell us how you heard about the KEYS Program.**

Krystina: I heard about the KEYS Program when I came into this particular shopping center in Vista just to purchase some groceries at one of grocery stores here, and saw one of the "For Lease" signs in a vacant space. It kind of sparked my interest because I had already been working out of a very small residential studio and was looking to grow my business into something larger and move into a commercial space.

And that's initially what sparked my interest in moving into the commercial arena in the first place. And then when I contacted the leasing agent at Kimco, she asked me a few questions, and she actually determined that I may be a good candidate for KEYS.

**Janelle: And what were some of the factors that made you a good candidate according to whom you talked to at Kimco?**

Krystina: The fact that I was a new business owner, and I had not owned a business prior, and I had already kind of worked out my own business plan. So that was one of the other qualifying factors in the program. And that I was just very passionate. I had short-term and long-term goals for my business in order for it to succeed.

**Janelle: And I would like to get into some of that passion a little bit more shortly. So what was the application process like for you, for applying for the KEYS Program?**

Krystina: Well the application process actually was quite simple. Once I toured this particular plaza, and worked out some possible suite options, I found one that I completely fell in love with. It was a suite that was pretty much already set up for the spa.

That is something that Kimco is very upfront about. They said we really want to be able to get our businesses into a space that's already pretty much set up for what you're looking to do, so that you don't have the additional start-up costs and the build-out costs that come with additional construction. So the Kimco KEYS agent was fantastic in trying to locate a space for us that we were going to be able to slide right into without a large amount of additional build-out costs, so that was great.

And then from there, we did our application and our lease and documents. They were very adamant, and I really appreciated the fact that if you want to meet with your attorney, you want to meet with an accountant, so you have a clear understanding of what you're moving into before we actually sign the lease. And they were there with us every step of the way and were great about following up. So the application process was quite simple.

**Janelle: So tell us about the idea then for your business a little bit more. What sparked the idea and what has fueled your passion for it?**

Krystina: Well, being a woman, I love pampering myself. I have always enjoyed receiving massages and facials and just things that made me feel really good about myself and helped me when I was having physical struggles, whether it was back issues and things like that. I've always enjoyed that in my life.

When I turned 37, I decided to go back to school and kind of make a career out of what I love to do, which is receive facials and massages and things like that, so I did. I went back to school, and the school I enrolled in, in addition to teaching you your basic curriculum, also teaches you a lot about business success, so that you can move out into the real world and launch your own business, if that's something that you wanted to do. And so they also helped prepare me for that launch, too.

Once I graduated and I was licensed, I rented my own residential studio and was working out of there, booking my clientele. It got to a point where my clientele was large enough that I was able to venture into the commercial arena and do something a little bit bigger, and now we're at a place where we're at this beautiful Kimco location. I love it. We've got fantastic traffic coming through here and I'm really looking to blow this area up with the spa treatments and things like that to pamper families and the community in this area.

**Janelle: What advantages do you think this location, specifically the space and the shopping center and the area, will provide your business?**

Krystina: Well we're located in an upper scale of Vista. We've got middle to upper class families in this area bringing in that type of income. This particular shopping center is a very busy shopping center from morning until evening. They've got different businesses in this plaza, anywhere from grocery shopping to Taekwondo, dentistry, pharmacy, and things like that. So lots of continual traffic coming through here, which is fantastic visibility for us.

We've also got a high school that is just across the street from us, so we've got those kids who've got those acne breakouts that we're also going to be able to market to, not only those teenagers, but their families as well. We're also surrounded by several senior communities, which we are currently

marketing to through their newsletter. We've got ads in their newsletters as well because we offer anti-aging treatments here, anti-acne treatments, and things like that to address all skin care needs.

So we're really kind of in a prime location. This area doesn't really have a day spa. They had one a few years ago, but they were closed down, and so we are really exclusively the only day spa in the Vista area, which really is a great opportunity for us as well.

**Janelle: Krystina, what would you say you would want your potential customers to know the most about Bell by Krys Day Spa?**

Krystina: Well our tagline is "offering a luxury day spa experience without the day spa pricing." So what that means is that we go over and beyond to not only make you feel like royalty from the moment you walk in our doors to the moment that you leave, but delivering our services, giving, while still giving results.

So we do have people that come in for facials, some of them come in just for the relaxation portion of it, and some come in because they have serious skin care concerns. So with our facials in particular, we're able to deliver relaxation and kind of get in all the aspects that they're looking for while still treating their skin so that they're leaving feeling like their skin looks different and feels different.

Over a series of treatments and some good at-home regimen and at-home care, there is really a significant change in their skin. And ultimately it boosts their confidence and they feel better about themselves.

**Janelle: And so what role is Kimco playing now in help you with your business and helping you get through the initial phase of getting it off the ground?**

Krystina: Well Kimco's been great because they've been helping with some of our advertising. Our grand opening is on Dec. 7, and Kimco has contacted the mayor of Vista to have the mayor come out and do our ribbon cutting ceremony for that grand opening, so we're really looking forward to that.

They took pictures of us signing the lease and handing us our keys when we first received our keys that first day when we were moving in. And then of course with the blog and additional things that they're assisting us with, because we were one of the KEYS businesses that signed up under their program. So they've been supportive thus far and we're really looking forward to working together with them and appreciate everything that Kimco's been doing for us so far.

**Janelle: What are some of your longer term plans for your spa? What's sort of your vision over the next few years for it?**

Krystina: Well, we look to grow a little bit larger over the next few years. Within five years we're looking to open a second location, likely in the downtown San Diego area. Of course we've had such a wonderful experience with Kimco, we hope to find a location in a Kimco plaza down there and kind of continue with our mutual respect for Kimco.

So we're definitely looking to expand the business over the next few years. Definitely within five years we're looking to open that second location, offering more treatments, like hydrotherapy and oxygen

treatments and things like that that are already booming in the industry. So we actually have large plans within the next five years, but we're very confident that we'll be able to meet and even exceed those.

**Janelle: Great, well, Krystina, congratulations on your opening. It was great talking with you.**

Krystina: Thank you, it was great talking with you as well.

**Janelle: All right, bye.**